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Newsletter



OFFICE FOR FOOD AND FEED CONSERVATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

CLINTON P. ANDERSON, Secretary of Agriculture
CHARLES F. BRANNAN, Director

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WASHINGTON ROUNDUP

Final arrangements are being made for a full-scale test of retail store distribution of the booklet, "Money-Saving Main Dishes," and application of the symbol to identify plentiful foods for consumers at the point of purchase. Last week's issue of the Newsletter explained these two phases of the new program.

About 1500 retail food stores in Lancaster and York counties, Pennsylvania, will cooperate in the trial program. And the local chambers of commerce have offered aid in publicizing the program.

The "plentiful foods" symbol, prepared by the Office for Food and Feed Conservation, displays a white banner against a red background. Across the banner are inscribed the words: Banner Buy - A Plentiful Food. Below the banner is the slogan: Save Food - Fight Inflation.

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Congressman Brooks Hays of Arkansas, a member of the House Banking and Currency Committee, has called upon the House of Representatives to pass the Senate-approved bill which would give the Administration authority to allocate grain to distillers. The bill now is in the House Banking and Currency Committee.

Mr. Hays inserted in the Congressional Record a letter from Secretary of Agriculture Anderson in reply to Mr. Hays' request for figures regarding the consumption of grain by the distillers.

The letter reads in part:

"In January, the last month of Government allocations, distillers used 1,700,000 bushels. But in the succeeding short month of February, they increased their grain consumption to slightly over 6,000,000 bushels. In March they further increased the amount of grain used to approximately 7,700,000. This was 1,200,000 bushels more than they used in March 1947 and is a near record for any peacetime month.

"As stocks of whiskey equal or exceed a 6-year supply, the distillers would suffer no hardship through the generous monthly allocation of 2,500,000 bushels as proposed in the bill the Senate has already passed. Moreover, the supply of distilled spirits at the end of January and before the industry increased its use of grain was enough to carry the industry for more than a year without any new production."

In his letter, Secretary Anderson pointed out that the distilling industry is a heavy consumer of corn and the supply of corn on farms, as of April 1, was a third less than that on hand a year ago and the smallest since 1937. He continued:

"Short supplies of corn, the country's principal feed grain, are partly responsible for the shrinkage in our livestock and poultry numbers. This, in turn, has contributed to the rise of food prices."

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World crop prospects continue to be favorable, according to a recent report of the Department of Agriculture's Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations. Crop developments on the whole were good through March and early April, and it is still expected that 1948 harvest breadgrains (wheat and rye) will be above the short crop of 86 million long tons in 1947.

The report certainly is encouraging. But there are two factors to be considered. Number one is the consideration that the forecast depends, to a great degree, for fulfillment on favorable weather conditions. The second point is to the effect that the harvest, while it could exceed the 1946 production of 90 million long tons of wheat and rye, still would be considerably below the 1935-39 average output of 117 million tons. This latter factor must be weighed with the thought that the population of the world has increased 10 percent since the beginning of the war.

CONSERVATION POSTERS

It's an ancient adage that a picture is worth thousands of words. With that time-proven thought in mind, the Office for Food and Feed Conservation has developed a series of six posters which dramatize some of the most important aspects of the grain conservation program. These posters are receiving widespread popularity as they roll from the printing presses. Distribution is being made in rural areas. These are the six posters:

"Kill Rats - Your Most Expensive Boarder." A ferocious fat rat is shown eating a huge ear of corn. He crouches upon a tattered newspaper lying on the granary floor. A headline in the paper reads, "Food Needed Abroad."

"4 Out of 10 Pigs Never Grow Up." Six healthy pigs, drawn Disney-style, are shown dancing to market. Four little "angel pigs" are floating above them, some playing harps, some weeping. They represent the 40 percent that die of disease, accident, etc. on the farm. "Save more of your pigs for market," the poster urges. "Your county agent can tell you how to do it."

"Don't Let Insects Destroy Your Grain." A huge, ugly grain insect hovers possessively over a pile of grain. The poster lists a 4-point program for farmers to follow in controlling the insects which destroy an estimated 5 percent of farm-stored grains yearly.

"Kill Those Pests." The poster shows a beef animal, wild with fright as insects attack. It points out that "livestock insects cause half billion dollar loss yearly in food, feed, fiber and hides." The poster emphasizes that the county agent is a source of control information.

"Stop Milk Losses." This is an effective dairyman's poster, showing an upraised hand in a "stop" gesture. The poster advises: "Cool immediately to 50 degrees...Keep it clean. . . Keep it cool...Keep it good."

"Good Pasture Saves Grain." On one side of the poster are two cows grazing in lush grass. On the other side are two cows nibbling at scanty grass. The poster points out that no grain is needed with good pasture in order to produce 25 pounds of 4 percent milk daily, whereas 10 pounds of grain are needed with poor pasture in order to produce this amount of milk.

CONSERVATION IN MINNEAPOLIS

Mrs. A. N. Saterlee, Director of the Minneapolis Food Conservation Commission, has sent us a report on conservation activities in the Twin City. The highlights:

Information on food conservation goes out to thousands of people in the Minneapolis area.

The generous contribution of time by local radio stations has continued since the war. The local press is also generous in publishing notices of meetings where speakers appear.

A Freedom Garden Program is in full swing. L. W. Corbett is chairman. This program includes most of the features of the Victory Garden Program which resulted in an estimated production of 11 freight cars of garden vegetables in 1945, the peak year.

The highlight of the moment is a Garden Clinic held at the Tuesday Consumer Center class in the Schmitt Music Center Auditorium. Plans for a food preservation program are now being set up by the local Red Cross Nutrition Service.

Children's gardens, under the direction of Miss Ruth Scribner, Senior Consultant in Science in the Minneapolis public schools, are now under way with children registering their gardens during the last two weeks of April.

The thrift idea is being stressed as a means of offsetting high food prices.

FOOD WASTE

Walter H. Heath, chief of the Buffalo, N. Y., station, National Food and Drug Administration, told 150 representatives of the milling industry that "the wastage of food consumed or defiled by rodents and insects during a period when millions of people were hungry is tragic and inexcusable." He added that food decomposition resulting from careless handling is equally deplorable.

"Conservation measures are not a simple matter of policing by federal and local agencies," Mr. Heath declared. "The stop-waste program requires participation by every food handler."

He advocated frequent inspection of milling facilities and immediate correction of unsanitary conditions, even though it might mean rebuilding the mill and the installation of new machinery. He also recommended frequent fumigation and cleaning to cut down insect and rodent infestation.

NEED FOR FEED CONSERVATION

From a recent issue of the Chicago Tribune:

"Milk cows on farms declined in 1947 for the third consecutive year... The concern in the dairy industry results from the prospect that unless the decline is halted the industry will be increasingly hard pressed to meet public demand, which has expanded substantially since before the war..."

"A spokesman for the American Dairy Association attributed the decrease in dairy herds to the high prices for grain..."

(NOTE: High grain prices are the result of a short feed supply)

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Coincidental with the above item is one from the New York Herald Tribune. It quotes James J. Norris, who recently returned from a year in Europe for War Relief Services, as saying that millions of European children were barely maintaining life on a starvation diet. Then, it adds:

"The only thing that will arrest world-wide spread of tuberculosis is milk and more milk," he said. "And sufficient wholesome food."

FREEDOM GARDENS

"The Spring Push is on here in Delaware," writes Extension Editor John Lafferty. "We have already launched our radio and news efforts to get gardening under way. We keep hitting gardening almost daily in one way or another on our radio program, and again this year I am seeing to it that we fill a garden page in each of our two Wilmington dailies each Saturday. To date there is every indication that gardening is as popular a subject as ever. At least, requests for information seem to be as heavy as in any previous year."

We will keep you informed on events in Washington and the programs of local committees and organizations. We welcome your suggestions and invite you to send us news of your activities in the voluntary food and feed program.

